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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (ADDED SENSITIVE CAPTION)

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [HO](#) [JA](#)
SUBJECT: DEMARCHE REQUEST ON HONDURAS ELECTION

1.(U) Paragraphs 2 and 9 contain an action request.

2.(U) Summary: The USG remains committed to finding a peaceful resolution to the political crisis in Honduras that results in the prompt restoration of the democratic constitutional order. As part of that effort, we continue to pursue efforts to convince the Honduran sides to implement the Tegucigalpa-San Jose Accord (TSJA), which includes a robust and credible international observation effort for Honduras, scheduled November 29 elections. Department requests that Embassy Tokyo demarche the Government of Japan at an appropriately senior level to urge support for observers and to urge it to follow through on its commitment to support the Honduran Supreme Election Tribunal,s (TSE) custodial program to enhance the integrity of the voting and tallying processes. The Embassy can draw on points in paragraph 9 below. End summary

13. (U) On October 30, representatives of deposed President of Honduras Manuel Zelaya and de facto regime leader Roberto Micheletti signed the TSJA, which provides a mechanism through which democratic and constitutional order can be restored in Honduras after President Zelaya was deposed and expelled from the country on June 28. The TSJA provides for the establishment of a government of national unity and reconciliation, refers the question of restoring Zelaya to the presidency to the Honduran Congress, establishes a four-person verification commission to adjudicate disputes over interpretation of the Accord, and calls for the establishment of a truth commission following the inauguration of a new government on January 27, 2010. The Accord is the result of four months of intense engagement on the part of the international community, primarily by the Organization of American States (OAS), our partners in the region, and the United States. The Accord is a Honduran solution agreed to by both parties and it represents the best path toward the resolution of this protracted political crisis in Honduras.

14. (SBU) Before and after the June 28 coup, the United States maintained its support for democratic and constitutional order in Honduras and strongly opposed the coup and resulting limitations on human rights and fundamental freedoms. The USG refused to recognize the de facto regime, suspended or terminated certain types of assistance, stopped processing non-immigrant visas, and revoked visas of key de facto regime officials and supporters. In addition, Honduras was suspended from the OAS through a decision of the OAS General Assembly adopted by consensus. Furthermore, the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank suspended disbursements. With the TSJA in place, Embassy Tegucigalpa has reopened the NIV section and the USG is considering what further sanctions may be lifted as the TSJA is implemented and the democratic order is restored.

15. (SBU) Honduras now turns its attention to implementing the

TSJA and holding free, fair, and transparent elections on November 29. Step by step implementation of the Accord is critical to restore the democratic and constitutional order in Honduras. As a solution by and for the Honduran people, the United States is strongly supportive of the TSJA, and will assist in its implementation. The United States is providing financial assistance to the verification commission formed in accordance with the TSJA and U.S. Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis is one of two international members of the four-person commission. The United States is also strongly committed to supporting a robust and credible domestic and international observation of the elections, especially considering the critical need to restore the democratic order in Honduras. The TSE is an independent institution which was in place well before the June 28 coup interrupted democratic governance in Honduras. The U.S. continued its technical assistance to the TSE even while imposing restrictions on other types of assistance as a result of the coup.

¶6. (SBU) Through the U.S. Agency for International Development, the United States is providing \$1.9 million in assistance for the entire 2009 election process, including the primary elections held last November. For the upcoming November 29 general elections, we are providing \$466,000 in technical assistance to the TSE to strengthen its capabilities to administer the elections and transmit accurate results in a timely manner. We are also providing \$635,000 to Honduran NGOs to support their efforts to organize and train domestic observers and establish a quick count process to detect signs of potential fraud and manipulation of election results. The United States is also planning to furnish about \$650,000 to send at least 30 U.S.-based election observers from non-governmental organizations.

¶7. (SBU) Due to the political uncertainty in the months prior to the signing of the TSJA, NGOs and international organizations that might have fielded election observers under normal circumstances delayed preparations to do so. The USG is moving rapidly to field election observers and hopes that other governments will either deploy observers of their own or support efforts of other organizations to do so.

¶8. (SBU) The Department understands the TSE has been negotiating with the Japanese Embassy in Tegucigalpa for months regarding \$2.5 million in Japanese Government support for the elections. According to the information provided to Embassy Tegucigalpa, the TSE has not yet received any funding from the Government of Japan. The TSE had been counting on this aid to fund its &custodio8 program, which places a TSE representative at each of the country,s polling locations. These representatives play a crucial role in assuring the integrity of the balloting process and reporting results to the TSE.

¶9. (SBU) Action: Department requests Embassy Tokyo to deliver a demarche to the GOJ at the highest appropriate level to achieve the following objectives:

- Underscore the importance of the November 29 elections as a critical step to restoring the constitutional and democratic order in Honduras following the June 28 coup.

- Thank the Government of Japan for their continued strong interest in Honduras and their pledge of assistance for the upcoming elections

- Urge the Japanese to follow through their commitment to support the TSE,s custodial program as soon as possible.

- Encourage Japan to send election observers to support a robust and credible international monitoring effort for the Honduran elections.

- Stress that the United States would welcome a decision by the Government of Japan to send observers on a bilateral

basis.

-- Note that while the international community, including the United States, has many concerns about an election held while the de facto regime is in control, the USG goal has always been to help the Honduran restore the democratic order in their country. We see free, fair and transparent elections as part of the solution to the crisis.

¶10. (U) Post should report results of efforts by cable to WHA/CEN Honduras desk officer Maria Gabriela Zambrano at 202-647-3482 or via email at zambranomg@state.sgov.gov.
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